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SPEECH

OF

MR. JAMES J. FARAN, OF OHIO,

ON

THE BILL TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF

AMERICAN SETTLERS IN OREGON.

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 1846.

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, on the bill to extend the jurisdiction and laws of the United States over the American settlers in Oregon, and to protect them in their rights—

Mr. FARAN addressed the committee as follows:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot concur in the opinion expressed yesterday by the venerable gentleman from Massachusetts, [Mr. ADAMS,] that action on this and other important measures relating to Oregon should be deferred until the Senate shall have acted on the "notice resolutions" that passed this body some two months ago. The proper course for us to pursue, in my judgment, is, to do what we think is right, without looking to or waiting on the Senate. Let us do our duty; we shall then have nothing with which to reproach ourselves, and the responsibility of failure will rest in the proper quarter. This body has acted on the "notice resolutions." They have passed from before us, and are in other hands. Having disposed of the leading measure relating to the Oregon territory, let us proceed to the other important measures, without which, the first—that of the notice—will not only be of no avail for good, but will be positively injurious. The bill before us is eminently one of these important measures, and should not be delayed for any action of the Senate; and particularly when we know that action in that body on the "notice resolutions," has been delayed by matters that certainly reflect no credit on the body influenced by them.

It has been proposed to insert a provision in this bill that shall define the limits of the territory of Oregon, particularly its northern limit—assigning the latitude of 54° 40' as the northern limit. This, I think, should be done, if for no other reason than

to settle what country we mean when speaking of the Oregon country; for an effort has been made, in a certain quarter, to create the impression that, by the Oregon territory, is meant "*the country on the Columbia river and south of it, all lying below the line of 49°.*"—(Hon. W. H. HAYWOOD'S Speech.) This I consider incorrect. By the Oregon territory, I understand all the country on the northwest coast of America, lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific ocean, and the parallels of 42° and 54° 40' of north latitude. That is the country that is usually, generally, I may say universally, meant by Oregon, when it is spoken of by the people, the press, and the Government.

There is no Government that put forth any claims or pretensions between these parallels on that coast, adverse to the title of the United States, except Great Britain. And I mention 54° 40' as the northern limit or boundary, because, in our treaty with Russia in 1824, we in effect agreed that no settlement should be made by citizens of the United States north of that latitude, on said coast, or the islands adjacent thereto. The line of 54° 40' has not been run or marked, but that which can be made certain, is in law held and considered as sufficiently definite to be enforced.

I was highly gratified yesterday that the proposition to limit our rights to 49° received but two or three votes. The adoption of such an amendment would have been an acknowledgment that the United States had no right to any portion of Oregon north of 49°. The consequence of such a declaration would have had an unhappy influence upon the settlement of this question. Aside from such a declaration not being warranted by the history of our title, it would have confined our claims to limits that we could never have passed with any

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show of propriety, and would have retarded rather than advanced a proper settlement of the question.

The considerations that induced the rejection of that amendment are sufficient to answer the clamors that have been raised against the President for not disclosing to the world what he is willing to do in this controversy, and how he is willing to settle it. For the President, in the present state of this controversy, to make any other declaration on this subject than what he made in his Annual Message, and has repeated more than once since, would be an act of criminality to the country, that could scarcely be palliated or excused. Some persons seem to be fearful that, unless the President acknowledges that he is willing to settle on the forty-ninth parallel, the thunders of the British cannon will break on our ears before we are aware; and they are in misery because the President does not speak out. Why don't they ask Great Britain to speak out? Has Great Britain declared how she is ready and willing to settle this controversy? The last definite proposition was made by the United States. Why not clamor against Great Britain instead of their own Government? The only answer I can give for such conduct is, that it is *their fashion*.

Again: the adoption of such an amendment would be a good deal like *arbitrating*. To arbitrate, would be to give Great Britain the chance of getting something south of 49°. An offer to divide the country by the parallel of 49° was promptly rejected by Great Britain. After some time, she proposes arbitration. What for? In order to settle on the line of 49°? Not at all. She had refused that flatly. She offered arbitration for two reasons. One, to try the chances of getting something south of 49°, supposing that, as it had been offered to her once by the President, if the affair should come to the worst, she could get the line of 49° at any time she would say the word, without arbitration. The other, to present to the world the appearance, on her part, of an anxious desire to settle this matter; knowing, however, at the same time, that arbitration had been previously refused, and that it could not be entertained by the United States with any sort of propriety.

A great effort has been made to produce the impression throughout the country, that the forty-ninth parallel of latitude *ought to be and is to be* the line dividing the possessions of the United States and Great Britain in the Oregon territory. This has been attempted in several ways.

It has been attempted, by asserting, that in offering to settle on the line of the 49th degree of latitude, the President admitted by that act that we had no just claim north of that line. Is this assertion true? This offer was made as a compromise. The idea of a compromise supposes the yielding of some right or claim of the party making the offer. The President claims the whole country to 54° 40'. And when he offered to compromise at 49°, no just inference can be drawn from that act, that he considered we had no just claim north of 49°. Had we no just claim north of 49°, and had the President so viewed it, it would have been no compromise to offer to settle by that line. Not only so, but the President would have justly subjected himself, under such circumstances, to the charge of

duplicity; and those who claim to be the friends of the President put him, in my opinion, in a very improper position by this sort of argument.

The assertion is also wrong in regard to the facts and history of this controversy. On various occasions, in making offers of compromise, our Government, through its proper agents, entered its solemn protest, that such offers should not be held or considered as diminishing or weakening our claim to the whole of the country. And when our last offer of compromise was rejected, it was withdrawn; and, in the language of the President, "our title to the whole Oregon territory asserted, and as is believed maintained, by irrefragable facts and arguments."

This impression has also been attempted to be produced by asserting, that by entering into the conventions of 1818 and 1827, the United States acknowledged that Great Britain had rights in the Oregon territory equal to their own; and such being the case, an equitable division of the country would assign all south of 49° to the United States, and all north to Great Britain.

If those conventions acknowledged anything at all, they acknowledged tacitly that neither party had the disposition or ability, at the times they were entered into, to maintain by force the claims advanced by it to any part of the territory on the northwest coast of America. Their operation went to exclude acknowledgments of any just claims in either party, and to postpone to a future period the investigation and settlement of any claim that might be made to that country by either of the contracting parties. This, I think, is evident from the third article of the convention of 1818, which reads as follows:

"ART. 3. It is agreed, that any country that *may be claimed* by either party on the northwest coast of America westward of the Stony Mountains, shall, together with its harbors, bays, and creeks, and the navigation of all rivers within the same, be free and open, for the term of ten years from the date of the signature of the present convention, to the vessels, citizens, and subjects of the two Powers: It being well understood that this agreement is not to be construed to the prejudice of any claim which either of the two high contracting parties *may have* to any part of the said country, nor shall it be taken to affect the claims of any other Power or State to any part of said country; the only object of the high contracting parties in that respect being, to prevent disputes and differences amongst themselves."

And also from the third article of the convention of 1827, which is as follows:

"ART. 3. Nothing contained in this convention, or in the third article of the convention of the 30th of October, 1818, hereby continued in force, shall be construed to impair, or in any manner affect, the claims which either of the contracting parties *may have* to any part of the country westward of the Stony or Rocky Mountains."

Now, it must be apparent from the wording of these articles, that the United States acknowledged this, and no more, that if Great Britain had any claims to any part of the country westward of the Stony Mountains, the entering into these conventions should not operate to the prejudice of any such claims; but that the same, if any existed, should be in as good a state at the termination of the convention, as when the convention was formed. The parties to these conventions at their dates did not want to have any disputes or differences amongst themselves, as to who had the best claim to the country; they dropped that for the time

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And to confirm this impression on the public mind, it has been seriously argued that the parallel of 49° was established by the treaty of Utrecht, concluded between Great Britain and France, April, 1713. I believe the civilized world has yet to make the discovery that either France or Great Britain, at the date of that treaty, made any, the least, pretension to the ownership of a single foot of land on the northwest coast of America. France never has. And the idea of two Powers establishing a boundary line for themselves in a country in which neither of them had any pretensions of ownership, is to my mind ridiculous.

Great efforts have also been made by some to create doubts as to the justice of our claim to any part of the country north of 49°. And these doubts are all resolved in favor of England. They go on the principle that if we cannot make out a perfect title in ourselves, Great Britain should have the benefit of what is weak in us; not that she can make out in herself a title better, or even as good as our own, but because they think ours is not as strong as it might be. It is sufficient for me to know that our title is the better of the two, and that no other civilized Power pretends to have any claim to the country.

Indeed, all kinds of arguments have been made, and positions assumed, to convince this nation that the parallel of 49° ought to be, and is to be, the dividing line in Oregon between the United States and Great Britain. One good may result from these efforts, and that is, the conviction that Great Britain has not the scintilla of a title south of 49°. For to convince us beyond doubt that 49° ought to be the line, it was absolutely necessary to show that our title up to that line is clear and unquestionable. Very few, however, have undertaken, on the floor of this House, or in the Senate, to prove that the British claim to the whole country is better than our own. But in some instances this has been done, and I must confess, though with a burning cheek, that they succeeded in the effort much better than any British Minister has ever done.

But after all these efforts to show that the United States ought not to press any claim to the country north of 49°—that that line ought to be the boundary—what reason is there for believing that Great Britain will agree to that line any more readily than the line of 54° 40'? All these efforts seem to have been made on the supposition that all that is to be done to have such a settlement made, is for our Government to indicate a disposition to settle in that way, and Great Britain will readily acquiesce. Let us see if this be so, and look at the probabilities of Great Britain giving up all pretensions south of the 49th parallel. And in calculating these probabilities, we must look at the imperious character of that Government, and keep in mind the declaration of Lord John Russell, that "it cannot be a matter of indifference that the tone of the character of England should be lowered in any transaction we [they] may have to carry on with the United States."

Let us first examine the offers that have been made and rejected by the parties respectively in their negotiations on this subject, in order to see

how far Great Britain has committed herself in maintaining any particular position in this controversy.

BRITISH OFFERS.—October 6, 1818.
 "That so much of the northwest coast of America as lies between the forty-fifth and forty-ninth parallels of latitude, with its harbors, &c., should be free and open to the citizens and subjects of the two Powers respectively, for the purposes of trade and commerce. This agreement not to prejudice the claims of either party to any territorial authority within those limits."
 Rejected by our Government.

July 13, 1824.
 "That the boundary of the two Powers be designated by extending the line of the forty-ninth parallel to the northeast branch of the Columbia, thence down the same to the Pacific. The navigation of the Columbia to be free to the citizens and subjects of both Powers."
 This was rejected.

December 1, 1826.
 "That, in addition to the foregoing, the possession of Port Discovery, in the southern coast of De Fuca's Inlet, and a small strip of country to be annexed thereto. Also, that no work should be established on the Columbia to impede or hinder the free navigation thereof."
 This was rejected.

August 26, 1844.
 "In addition to the previous offers of July 13, 1824, and December 1, 1826, to make free to the United States any port or ports that the United States might desire, either on the main land or on Vancouver's Island, south of latitude 49°."
 This was rejected.

OFFERS BY THE UNITED STATES.—Sept. 17, 1818.
 "To extend the forty-ninth parallel of latitude to the Pacific Ocean, with the navigation of all streams intersected by this line and flowing into the Pacific, to be open and free to the citizens and subjects of both Powers."
 This was rejected by the British.

April 2, 1824.
 "Mr. Rush proposed to continue the third article of the treaty of October 29, 1818, with the additional clause that no settlement should be made by American citizens north of the fifty-first parallel of latitude, nor by British subjects either south of the fifty-first degree or north of the fifth-fifth degree of north latitude."
 This was rejected.

July 13, 1824.
 "Mr. Rush proposed to modify the foregoing by substituting the forty-ninth parallel of latitude for the fifty-first."
 This was rejected.

November 15, 1826.
 "To extend the forty-ninth parallel to the Pacific, and if it intersected any branch of the Columbia navigable to the ocean, the navigation of such branch to be free to the citizens and subjects of both Powers."
 This was rejected.

July 12, 1845.
 "To divide the Oregon territory by the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, and to make free to Great Britain any port or ports on Vancouver's Island, south of this parallel, which Great Britain might desire."
 This was rejected.

To recapitulate the main offers and rejections.
 Great Britain has twice rejected the line of 49° with the free navigation of the Columbia; and once rejected the line of 49° with free ports on Vancouver's Island south of that line.
 She offered, 1st, that the country between the parallels of 45° and 49° be jointly occupied for the purposes of trade and commerce—Great Britain to have all south of 45° and all north of 49° to herself.

2d. Great Britain to have all north of the Columbia by its northeast branch; the United States to have all south—the navigation of the Columbia to be free to both.

3d. The United States to have, in addition to the above, the possession of Port Discovery, and a strip of country annexed thereto.

4th. The United States to have, in addition to the two foregoing propositions, the freedom of any port or ports south of 49°.

In all these offers and rejections Great Britain has not moved from the position of claiming the Columbia for the boundary line. And it is easy to see how few privileges she has at any time offered us north of the Columbia.

In addition to these, let us look at the declarations of the British plenipotentiaries during these negotiations.

Messrs. Gallatin and Rush, in their letter of October 20, 1818, to the Secretary of State, say, "that the British plenipotentiaries declared they would not agree to any proposition that did not give them the harbor at the mouth of the Columbia in common with the United States."

Mr. Rush, in his letter to Mr. Adams, Secretary of State, August 12, 1824, says, "that the British plenipotentiaries declared that, in proposing the offer of July 13, 1824, they considered Great Britain as departing largely from the full extent of her right, and that the boundary marked out in their own written proposal was one from which the Government of the United States must not expect Great Britain to depart."

At the conference of December 1, 1826, the British plenipotentiaries declared "that the offer now made was considered by the British Government as not called for by any just comparison of the grounds of those claims and of the counter claims of the United States; but rather as a sacrifice which the British Government had consented to make with a view to obviate all evils of future differences in respect to the territory west of the Rocky Mountains."

At the conference of September 24, 1824, the British plenipotentiary declared that "he did not feel authorized to enter into discussion respecting the territory north of the 49th parallel of latitude, which was understood by the British Government to form the basis of negotiation on the side of the United States, as the line of the Columbia formed that on the side of Great Britain."

Mr. Pakenham, in rejecting Mr. Buchanan's proposition of July 12, 1845, said "he trusted that the American plenipotentiary would be prepared to offer some further proposal for the settlement of the Oregon question more consistent with fairness and equity, and with the reasonable expectations of the British Government."

"This proposal, in fact, offers less than that tendered by the American plenipotentiaries in the negotiation of 1826 and rejected by the British Government. On that occasion it was proposed that the navigation of the Columbia should be made free to both parties."

Such is the nature of the declarations made by the British Government during the negotiations on this subject. A high tone was assumed at the start, and has been maintained ever since. She started out with extravagant pretensions—such as

she has always assumed whenever she has had anything to do with a Power that she supposed to be weaker than herself—and of these extravagant pretensions she has scarcely yielded an iota.

Let us look a little further. Soon after the arrival of the President's Inaugural Address, in which he asserted that our title to the whole of Oregon was clear and unquestionable, Lord John Russell, in the course of his remarks in the House of Commons, used the following language:

"The President of the United States has made, as I have already read to the House, a peremptory claim to the whole of this territory. He has claimed the whole possession of it for the United States, and has, in an unusual manner, called upon the people of the United States, with their wives and children, to occupy that territory. That district is becoming, on account of the forts on the Columbia river, more important every year. After the statement of the President of the United States, I considered it impossible that her Majesty's Government should not endeavor to obtain a speedy solution of this question. I am sure they will feel it impossible to allow the present undefined and unsettled state of relations between the two countries to continue, without danger that the people of the United States, acting upon the suggestion of the President, may endeavor to disturb British subjects in rights which they hold in virtue of existing treaties, and may produce a state of things dangerous to the peace of the two countries. For my own part I will say, in all moderation, that I am not prepared to say that this country ought to put forward any arrogant pretensions."

"I do not pretend to define—what it properly belongs to her Majesty's advisers to define—the diplomatic proposals that should be made. I will not pretend to say what line ought to be laid down; but this I will say, that I do not think we can make any proposal which will be less than the proposal made by Mr. Canning [this was the offer of July 13th, 1824, making the Columbia river the dividing line] with any regard for our own interest or our honor. (Cheers.) I may be told that it does not matter if this rocky and barren territory should be claimed, or occupied, or taken by the United States. Yet, sir, I must say it does matter. (Cheers.) It cannot be a matter of indifference that a large territory, to which we have a better and juster title, should be yielded to what I must call a blustering announcement on the part of the President of the United States. It cannot be a matter of indifference that the communication between that country west of the Rocky Mountains and China, the East Indies, and the whole of South America, should be surrendered at once to a foreign Power; but, above all, it cannot be a matter of indifference that the tone of the character of England should be lowered in any transaction we may have to carry on with the United States."

The reply of Sir Robert Peel to these remarks of Lord John Russell are decided. He said:

"As this subject has been brought under discussion, I trust not improperly by the noble Lord, I feel it my imperative duty, on the part of the British Government, to state, in language the most temperate, but, at the same time, the most decided, that we consider we have rights respecting the territory of Oregon, which are clear and irresistible. We trust still to arrive at an amicable adjustment of our claim; but having exhausted every effort for the settlement, if our rights shall be invaded we are resolved and we are prepared to maintain them."

In the House of Lords, Lord Aberdeen, after expressing the hope that an amicable adjustment might be made, remarked, "I can only say that we possess rights which, in our opinion, are clear and unquestionable; and, by the blessing of God, and your support, these rights we are fully prepared to maintain."

Such is the ground on which Great Britain has planted herself in this controversy, and appears in the eyes of the world. What reason is there for supposing that she will, at this day, after having, on three several occasions, rejected propositions to make the 49th degree the dividing line—two of them embracing the free navigation of the Columbia—after her repeated declarations that the Co-

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lumbia should be the dividing line, that the free navigation of the Columbia could not be yielded, and that the Government of the United States must never expect Great Britain to recede from that position—I repeat, what reason is there for believing that Great Britain will now settle by making the 49th parallel the dividing line? I should like the 49° gentlemen to give us some argument on this subject. They have repeatedly urged, with some few exceptions, that our title between the 42d and 49th parallels of latitude in the Oregon country is clear and indisputable, and that they would never consent to surrender one inch to Great Britain south of that line; but they have given us no reason for supposing that Great Britain will now agree to the 49th parallel as a boundary, after having so repeatedly rejected it. It has, indeed, been said that our title below 49° is so strong and irresistible that Great Britain's sense of justice will induce her to yield readily to that parallel as the boundary. Sense of justice of Great Britain! Her history presents us with numerous instances of the manner in which that sense of justice has operated on her. The nation that relies on that, relies on a broken reed, as the dear experience of many can attest. Her history shows that all her energies, her object and aim, have pointed to her own power and aggrandizement, no odds at what sacrifice of national or maritime law, faith of treaties, justice, or humanity. To accomplish this great object, she has marked with human blood nearly every green spot and arid plain on this footstool of the Almighty.

Her character, so far as a sense of justice is concerned, was very well described by one of her own writers in the sixth volume of the Edinburgh Review, in 1805, and it has lost none of its force by her subsequent history. He says:

"To interfere actively in the domestic affairs of all other nations; to regulate the succession of their governors; to take part in every quarrel; to claim the lands of one party for assisting him, and seize the lands of the other for beating him; to get allies by force, and take care that nobody shall rob them but ourselves; to quarter troops upon our neighbors, and pay them with our neighbors' goods; this is what we call ROMAN policy! Whether it be the English policy in any part of the globe, let the world judge. Rome held the stakes to every game of war that was played throughout the hemisphere; and the suspicious circumstance is, that whoever lost or won, she never failed to gain something. Is there no similar ground of suspicion in the East? While Tippoo is despoiled for befriending the French; and the Nizam is despoiled for befriending the English; while Holkar is despoiled for beating the Peishwa, and the Peishwa is despoiled for being beaten by Holkar, who is it that is cun-ched by befriending and beating them all?"

Who but England.

Another of her writers in Bell's Weekly Messenger, in 1809, thus describes this "sense of justice," as applied to this country, by Great Britain. He says:

"Whenever circumstances have in any way admitted it, our tone towards America has always been insulting, and our conduct everything but friendly. Every new hope on the continent; every straw to the drowning expectations of Europe, has but aggravated this unworthy sentiment. In our prosperity we have bullied America; and when things are not so well with us, we have vented our spite in injurious language and unworthy conduct towards her. Whilst there were any hopes in Spain, America could get nothing direct from us. But disappointment brought us to our senses, and the negotiation was renewed. The coalition war on the continent has since broken out, and we begin to repent of our condescension.

"In this manner has the American negotiation been on and off, during some years. Our demands rising with our hopes and prosperity, and our moderation coexistent with our disappointment."

England's sense of justice! Look for living illustrations of it in her conduct respecting China, in reference to the Island of Chusan, and her treatment of the Argentine Republic.

By the provisions of the treaty between Great Britain and China, the Chinese agreed to pay to Great Britain a certain sum as a sort of ransom, and the British were to retain possession of the Island of Chusan until the money should be paid, but which, when this ransom money was paid, was to be surrendered to the Chinese. This ransom money has been paid by the Chinese to the uttermost farthing, and yet, in defiance of the treaty stipulation, England proposes to retain possession of Chusan, and claim it as her own, on the plea that it is invaluable to her in a political and maritime point of view.

And what is the substance of Sir William Gore Ouseley's excuse for British interference in the Argentine? Nothing more than England's friendly interference in getting a treaty negotiated between Brazil and the Argentine, in 1828. Because she did an act of kindness, that act is made the license for whipping the party benefited. That is the excuse; the reason, however, is, that England wants to obtain privileges which the Republic does not feel disposed to concede to her; and she then falls back on her reserved right—that of might.

I never wish to see my country confide in England's sense of justice. It will do very well when the British interests do not come in conflict with it. But when her interests and sense of justice conflict, the former is preferred to the latter. So I have read her history.

But to return. What else do we find likely to interfere with Great Britain agreeing to a settlement on 49°? We find that, after the rejection by Mr. Pakenham of Mr. Polk's offer of July 12, 1845, the offer was withdrawn, and our title asserted and maintained by an argument to the whole country up to 54° 40'. But, say the 49° gentlemen, this is no impediment to a settlement on the 49th parallel of latitude; for Mr. Polk having offered to settle by making that line the boundary, he could not, with any sort of propriety, in case Great Britain would offer that same proposition, reject such a proposition. Aside from saying that this is but begging the question, I will observe, that it is a serious impediment in the way of British pride. To put as favorable construction upon the withdrawal of the offer of 49° by Mr. Polk as it will bear, it is saying to Great Britain, If you wish to settle on as good terms as that you have just rejected, you must come and offer them yourself, for you will never get as good an one from me again.

The withdrawal shut the door to offers on our part, but left the latehating hanging out to enable Great Britain to open the door to new offers if she saw proper to do so. The question then comes back to us again, what likelihood that Great Britain will, after this summary rejection of Mr. Polk's offer to make 49° the boundary, and the withdrawal of it by Mr. Polk, now come forward and agree to settle on the terms she then rejected? Her false pride, and the tone she has uniformly adopt-

ed towards this country, will prevent her. She would think that too much of a humiliation to be practised by her towards this country. I apprehend no such offer will be made on her part. Better offers had been previously rejected—this one was rejected summarily, and was then withdrawn, and in a manner indicating that we, on our part, were done making offers. Will Great Britain now come and renew the offer she last rejected? We are referred, for an answer to this, to the late declaration of Sir Robert Peel, where he is reported as having remarked, "that he could not say that our offer of 49° ought to have been refused." What is the obvious meaning of this almost intangible declaration of the British Premier? Simply, that our offer should not have been refused in the way in which it had been—so hastily, and without consulting the home Government—that it should have been sent home for their consideration. Had it been sent home, it would have given time for consideration; an answer might have been delayed until after Congress met, and the Annual Message of the President published. This delay would have enabled them to take advantage of circumstances; to accept, reject, or propose to modify, as circumstances would suggest. In any event, it would have saved them from their present awkward position. He does not say that Mr. Pakenham ought to have accepted our offer. For did he think so, and were such the opinion of the British Government, all that was necessary to be done to get them out of the position in which Mr. Pakenham's hasty rejection of our last offer had placed them, would have been to have pursued the usual plan of rectifying such diplomatic blunders—to recall Mr. Pakenham, provide him with an appropriate situation elsewhere, send another Minister here, and the whole would have been settled. The very circumstance, that Mr. Pakenham is still here, is proof conclusive to my mind, that the construction I have given Sir Robert Peel's remarks is correct.

We also find another impediment in the way of a settlement on the parallel of 49°.

To deprive the Hudson Bay Company of the use of the Columbia river and of Puget's Sound, or of De Fuca's Straits, is to destroy that powerful company. And it is that company's power and interest that contribute as much as anything else to prevent Great Britain from settling this in any other way than making the Columbia the basis.

It seems to be well understood in the territory that the British Government has given assurances to this company that it will not surrender any portion of the country north of the Columbia, and if it does, that the company shall be compensated for all their improvements made in that part of the territory north of the Columbia, and yielded by Great Britain.

This I gather from Mr. Wyeth's letter of February 4, 1839, to the chairman of the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives. For the purpose of showing the hold the British Government has upon the Oregon country through the agency of this company, I will read the concluding part of this letter. Mr. Wyeth says:

"In conclusion, I will observe, that the measures of this

company have been conceived with wisdom, steadily pursued, and have been well seconded by their Government, and the success has been complete; and, without being able to charge on them any very gross violations of the existing treaties, a few years will make the country west of the mountains as completely English as they can desire. Already the Americans are unknown as a nation, and as individuals their power is despised by the natives of the land. A population is growing out of the occupancy of the country, whose prejudices are not with us; and before many years, they will decide to whom the country shall belong, unless, in the meantime, the American Government make their power felt and seen to a greater degree than has yet been the case."

This company, so powerful and influential, is well known to be opposed to a settlement of this controversy on any other terms than making the Columbia the dividing line—the navigation of that river to be always free. The British Government will have to overcome the power and influence of this company, before it would accede to a settlement on the 49th parallel of latitude.

It does seem to me, in looking at all these things, that those gentlemen who seem to take it for granted that all we have to do in order to have this controversy settled is to say we are willing to make the 49th parallel the dividing line, have not sufficiently studied the subject in all its bearings. And I apprehend that they themselves, after awhile, will acknowledge that they labored in vain in taking the position they have, and that we 54° 40' men pursued the wisest course. But there are other considerations that cannot be overlooked in the discussion of this subject, that will go very far indeed, in my estimation, in preventing any settlement at all, unless we yield entirely to British terms.

The first of these to which I shall allude, is the indecision and want of unanimity in the action of Congress respecting the notice. This notice should have been authorized without a dissenting voice. The crisis was one that demanded firm and decided action. No odds how this crisis was brought about. It was on us, and had to be met. We should have marched up to it without hesitancy or faltering, without division, without calculating who would be pleased or displeased, without looking to the right hand or to the left, without inquiring if there was a lion in the way. The crisis demanded decision. To hesitate was an evidence of weakness. There was hesitation; and hesitation from fear of giving offence to Great Britain—for fear of war with a Power, armed, as was represented, at all points, while we were represented as weak and powerless. And all this by men of high and commanding intellect, and great influence in the country. What effect would all this necessarily have on Great Britain? What, but to render her indifferent about a speedy settlement of the question, and embolden her in insisting on her own terms? This is the natural effect of such faltering, and indecision, and inactivity, as was shown in relation to the notice. And those who pursued this course have much to answer for to their country. They want peace above all things, but timidity never secured to a country peace, but invited aggression, and aggression only.

Another of these considerations, and as powerful as any other, arises outside of the Halls of Congress: I allude to the efforts of commercial and other presses, to censure the course pursued by the

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Administration in reference to the Oregon question, and to extol that pursued by Great Britain.

There seems to be a class of citizens in this country who think and act as if their own Government was always wrong when it has any controversy with any foreign Power, and especially with that of Great Britain. It is unfortunate for the country that this is so; yet it is too painfully true. In these cases, with such persons, the Administration is constantly doing something inconsistent with honor, justice, and right—our Government demands too much—is too grasping—takes wrong views of matters—in fine it is wrong, and wrong continually, except when it humbles itself to others. On the other hand, the British Government is lauded as being conciliatory, mild, dignified, magnanimous, Christian-like—such as becomes, in their estimation, a great and powerful nation. Every palliation and excuse is made for the conduct of our adversary; no mercy for the conduct of their own country.

Such persons—and they constitute a powerful class—have always existed among us. I had hoped that they had become extinct, but the history of the times in relation to this controversy indubitably shows that that hope was a vain one. And I have not the least doubt but that, in case this country should get involved in a war with any foreign Power, this class will denounce their own Government, take the part of our adversary, and do all they can to make the war result disastrously to American arms.

We have had numerous instances of the manifestation of this feeling by this class of our citizens, in the history of our Government; and it may not be uninteresting or unimportant, on the present occasion, to refer to some of the most prominent of them. The similarity of sentiment and language in the past and the present expression of the feeling to which I have alluded, is very striking.

The first of these instances to which I shall allude is that of impressment by English vessels of war of American seamen from American vessels.

This practice of the English, so outrageous to the personal rights of our sailors, so insulting to our national character, so destructive of the rights of an independent nation, and so adverse to humanity, found apologists in American citizens holding prominent positions in society.

Timothy Pickering, who had held distinguished positions under the Government, in 1808 declared, in reference to this practice of the English, that—

"It is perfectly well known that Great Britain desires to obtain only her own subjects."

"The evil we complain of arises from the impossibility of always distinguishing the persons of two nations, who a few years since were one people, who exhibit the same manners, speak the same language, and possess similar features."

"The British ships of war, agreeably to a right claimed and exercised for ages—a right claimed and exercised during the whole of the Administrations of Washington, of Adams, and of Jefferson, continue to take some of the British seamen found on board of our merchant vessels, and with them a small number of ours, from the impossibility of distinguishing Englishmen from citizens of the United States."

After this manner was this odious, insulting, and tyrannical practice justified, not only by Timothy Pickering, but by hundreds of others claiming to

be American citizens, while our own Government was derided and abused for endeavoring to suppress it, and obtain redress for injuries that had been sustained under it. Timothy Pickering was but one of a class who, during that struggle for our rights as well as during the war, were the most bitter, violent opponents and abusers of Jefferson's and Madison's Administrations, and of the war, and who not only highly lauded Great Britain, but went so far, as I expect hereafter to show, as to attempt a dissolution of the union of these States.

The next instance to which I invite attention was what was known as the *Erskine arrangement*.

Shortly after Mr. Madison's inauguration, in 1809, Mr. Erskine, the British Plenipotentiary, proposed negotiations for the settlement of the differences between the two countries. This proposal was promptly acceded to by our Government, and in a very few days after, negotiations terminated in a friendly and satisfactory arrangement. This arrangement was highly applauded all over the country, particularly by the Federalists and their presses.

I make some quotations from the Federal newspapers of that day, and from other sources, for two reasons: one, to show how strongly partial this class of our citizens felt for England; the other, to show what a similarity of language and ideas there is between the comments of some of the presses of the present day on the Oregon controversy and the Federal presses of 1809:

"We owe it to Mr. Madison and his Cabinet to say, and we do it with pride and pleasure, that they have come forward with a degree of promptitude and manliness which reflects much honor on them and the country. Mr. Madison has now done what Mr. Jefferson was requested by the British Government to do in the note appended to the Treaty returned by him."—*United States Gazette*, April 24, 1809.

"The non-intercourse with France—which Congress threatened November 22, 1808, and really enacted March 1, 1809, to take place on the 24th May next—this measure against France produced what no measure against England alone could obtain. England was to be won with *equity of justice and impartiality*, and yielded to these considerations what she would not yield either to threats or force."—*Boston Repository*, May 9, 1809.

"We shall not stop to inquire whether the spirited and vigorous measures of New England—their determined public declarations that they would not submit to an unnecessary and destructive war, has induced the Administration to listen to the same terms which Great Britain has always been ready to offer, and to which we have uniformly contended she was sincerely disposed."—*Boston Gazette*, April, 1809.

"Look at the files of this paper for a twelvemonth. You will find it insisted upon that Great Britain wished for an adjustment of differences, and would come to an accommodation the moment we gave her chance to do so, by placing her on an equal footing with France. Mr. Erskine very promptly began by stating, on our Government's placing England on a footing with France, England will make reparation. Just precisely what I have said a hundred times over in this paper she would very gladly do."—*New York Evening Post*, 1809.

"Sincere and general as has been the joy spread by the return of a good understanding with England, will be the indignation which, at no distant day, a calm review of the snares which have been laid to entrap our peace and extinguish our *freedom*, will appear."—*Federal Republican*, July 4, 1809.

"Peace with England.—The war party and French partisans are thrown into complete confusion." "With the magnanimity and frankness characteristic of a great and enlightened nation, England made a second attempt to renew the terms of amity and peace between the two nations." "It proves what we have so often repeated, and which has ever been stubbornly denied by the Democrats, that Great Britain was always influenced by a sincere desire to accommodate her

unfortunate differences with America. The preservation of the country has grown out of the efforts of the minority in Congress."—*Federal Republican*, April 21, 1859.

I will stop quoting from the presses. I have given enough to show the spirit that actuated them. I will now give an extract from one or two speeches made in Congress on this subject.

Mr. B. Gardiner said, among other things, that—

"At last that state of things, originally proposed by Great Britain, has been brought about." And it is a melancholy fact, in this respect, that there never would have been an impediment, if this Government had been willing to do originally what it has at last consented to do."

"And it is now in proof before us, as I have always said and contended, that nothing was wanting but a proper spirit of conciliation—nothing but fair and honorable dealing on the part of this country, to bring to a happy issue all the fictitious differences between this country and Great Britain; and that is now acknowledged to be true; for saying which I have been so much censured—censured because it suited the purposes of some people to attribute to me a confidence in the justice of the British Government, which did not come an American citizen."

This was saying a great deal for Great Britain, and very little for his own Government.

But it so turned out in the course of events, that Great Britain refused to ratify this arrangement entered into by its Minister (Mr. Erskine) with our Government. This presented a new feature to the case. After all the laudations that had been bestowed on Great Britain by her friends in this country, and their congratulations that the peace of the two countries was to be preserved through the magnanimity and fair dealing of Great Britain, she repudiated the arrangement that had been entered into to preserve that peace.

It would naturally be supposed, after this, that these laudators of Great Britain would think better of their own Government, and less of the other. Not so, however. True to the text on which they continually hang their political sermons, they turned in and abused their own Government, and continued their praise of Great Britain. Hear some of them:

"By letters from well-informed men in England, we are assured that the conduct of Mr. Erskine is condemned by all parties in that country; that the temper of the public is far beyond that of the ministry. A very general opinion prevails there that it will be very difficult to keep any terms with this country; that we are governed by men devoted to the interests of France, who are determined to insist on terms from England which never can be obtained."—*Boston Palladium*, August 11, 1859.

"The people have been flagrantly deceived and grossly abused. The matter rests between Mr. Erskine and our Administration."

"In short, Mr. Erskine surrendered every thing and got nothing in return."

"For our part we have had but one opinion from the commencement of this mysterious affair, and we have made bold to express it. It is, that Mr. Erskine acted contrary to his instructions, and that Secretary Smith knew what these instructions were."—*Federal Republican*, July 31, 1859.

"It is proved beyond a doubt that the Government might, with just as much propriety, have enjoyed with General Smith or any other individual; concluded a convention, proceeded to carry it into execution on their part, and then raised a clamor against the Government of Great Britain, and accused them of perfidy and breach of faith for not recognizing and fulfilling the stipulations."—*U. S. Gazette*, December 29, 1859.

"If, as asserted by Mr. Erskine, his powers were communicated to our Cabinet in substance, if the heads of departments did early communicate to the leading members of both branches of their own politics the incompetency of his powers, and the probability of the rejection of the agreement by Great Britain, that that adjustment, so far from being a proof of a disposition to make peace and settle our differ-

ences, is the strongest evidence of a hostile temper; because Mr. Madison knew that the revulsion and the disappointment occasioned by it among our citizens would excite new clamors, and would break to pieces that formidable phalanx of men who, during our embarrassments, had learned to speak and think more favorably, and of course more justly, of Great Britain."—*U. S. Gazette*, December 9, 1859.

"If such has been his aim, (and perhaps a deeper politician does not exist,) it has been completely attained. His own party are again roused to a war pitch. Even some Federalists are open in their censure of Great Britain for doing her duty to herself, and exercising a right we have always claimed and received; and other Federalists are in doubt, and in favor of waiting to hear Mr. Erskine's explanation, and still propose to place an ill-deserved confidence in Mr. Madison."—*Idem*.

I do not deem it necessary to multiply these quotations from the Federal presses. What I have given are sufficient to exhibit what I intended.

The next leading instance relates to the late war.

This country, after having suffered almost every indignity, injury and insult, that could possibly be put upon us by Great Britain, was compelled, in self-defence, to declare war against that Government. The preservation of our rights as an independent nation, the vindication of our national honor, demanded war at our hands; a war well calculated, from the causes that produced it, to awaken into activity even the smallest particle of patriotism that existed in an American heart. But, aside from all this, our country, young in years and feeble in power, compared with Great Britain, was contending for its existence, honorable existence. It needed the aid of every one of its citizens. Suppose the head of a family should be engaged in a struggle of life or death, a struggle entered into to maintain his rights and honor, and some of the members of his family, instead of assisting him, should encourage his adversary and try to paralyze his own arm, what place should be assigned them in the scale of infamy? Yet this country had just such children, encouraging the enemy, and trying to paralyze its own arm, during its struggle with England. And this, too, when these same children had repeatedly declared that the Government could not be kicked into a war, so weak and imbecile, in their estimation, had it become, and so patient in receiving the kicks of the enemy.

I mean to give specimens of their sayings and doings at that time, to prove that I state nothing not warranted by the history of the country.

I shall refer to the pulpit first. I am sorry to do so, but I deem it necessary and proper.

From the discourse of the Rev. J. S. J. Gardiner, Rector of Trinity Church, Boston, delivered April 9, 1812, a short time previous to the declaration of war:

"The British, after all, save for us by their convoys infinitely more property than they deprive us of. Where they take one ship, they protect twenty. Where they commit one outrage, they do many acts of kindness."

"England is willing to sacrifice everything to conciliate us, except her honor and independence."

From another discourse, delivered July 23, 1812, by the same gentleman, just after the declaration of war:

"It is a war unexampled in the history of the world; wantonly proclaimed on the most frivolous and groundless pretences, against a nation from whose friendship we might derive the most signal advantages, and from whose hostility we have reason to dread the most tremendous losses."

"So far from there being British partisans in this country,

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it is difficult to find an individual candid enough to do that nation common justice."

"Every provocation has been offered to Great Britain on our part, and our resentment has risen in proportion as she has shown a conciliatory spirit."

"Let no considerations whatever, my brethren, deter you, at all times and in all places, from executing the present war. It is a war unjust, foolish, and ruinous. It is unjust, because Great Britain has offered us every concession short of what she conceives would be her ruin."

From the Rev. David Osgood, Pastor of the church at Medford:

"The strong propensities of so great a proportion of my fellow-citizens in favor of a race of demons, [French,] and against a nation [England] of more religion, virtue, good faith, generosity, and beneficence than any that now is, or ever has been upon the face of the earth, wring my soul with anguish, and fill my heart with apprehension and terror of the judgments of Heaven upon this sinful people."—Discourse delivered June 27, 1810.

"If, at the command of weak or wicked rulers, they undertake an unjust war, each man who volunteers his services in such a cause, or loans his money for its support, or by his conversations, his writings, or any other mode of influence, encourages its prosecution, that man is an accomplice in the wickedness, loads his conscience with the blackest crimes, brings the guilt of blood upon his soul, and in the sight of God and His law is a murderer."—Discourse delivered June 27, 1810.

"Were not the authors of this war in character nearly akin to the deists and atheists of France: were they not men of hardened hearts, seared consciences, reproachable minds, and desperate wickedness, it seems utterly inconceivable that they should have made the declaration."—Same.

From the Rev. Elijah Parish, D.D.:

"Such is the temper of American Republicans, so called. A new language must be invented before we attempt to express the baseness of their conduct, or describe the rottenness of their hearts."—Discourse delivered at Buffalo, April 7, 1814.

"You may as well expect the cataract of Niagara to turn its current to be head of Superior, as a wicked Congress to make a pause in the work of destroying their country, while the people will furnish the means."—Same.

"The full vials of despotism are poured on your heads. And yet you may challenge the plodding Israelite, the stupid African, the feeble Chinese, the drowsy Turk, or the frozen exile of Siberia, to equal you in tame submission to the powers that be."—Same.

"Let every man who sanctions this war by his suffrage or influence remember that he is laboring to cover himself and his country with blood. The blood of the slain will cry from the ground against him."—Same.

"How will the supporters of this anti-Christian warfare endure their sentence—endure their own reflections—endure the fire that forever burns—the worm that never dies—the hominans of Heaven, while the smoke of their torments ascends forever and forever."—Same.

"Those WESTERN STATES which have been violent for this abominable war of murder—those States which have thirsted for blood, God has given them blood to drink. Their men have fallen, their lamentations are loud and deep."—Same.

"This war is a monster, which every hour gormandizes a thousand crimes, and yet cries, 'Give, give.' In its birth it demanded the violation of all good faith, perjury of office, the sacrifice of neutral impartiality."—Same.

This sermon was republished at Halifax, with the following comments, among others:

"If energy of expression—if perspicuity of style—if elegance of composition ever regaled the eye, the ear, and the heart of a British subject, then this sermon claims the suffrage of every soul that loves the best of constitutions—namely, that of Old England! In short, it appears to be the most strenuous and grateful ebullition of a patriotic, evangelical, and martyr-like spirit."

I leave the pulpit, and go to the Federal presses. I shall pass by the particular denunciations of the war, and the then existing Administration, and present specimens of their attempts to prevent persons from loaning money to the Government to carry on the war.

"Let no man who wishes to continue the war by active means, by vote, or lending money, dare to prostrate himself at the altar of this past day; for they are actually as much partakers in the war as the soldier who thrusts the bayonet; and the judgment of God will await him."

"Will Federalists subscribe to the loan? Will they lend money to our national rulers? It is impossible. * * * To what purpose have Federalists exerted themselves to show the wickedness of this war, to rouse the public sentiment against it, and to show the authors of it to be unworthy of public confidence, but highly criminal, if now they contribute the status of money without which these rulers must be compelled to stop; must be compelled to return to the policy and measures under which this country once was at peace and singular prosperity."

"By the magnanimous course pointed out by Governor Strong, [of Massachusetts,] that is, by withholding all voluntary aid in prosecuting the war, and manfully expressing our opinions as to its injustice and ruinous tendency, we have arrested its progress, and driven back its authors to abandon their nefarious schemes, and to look anxiously for peace. * * * But some say, will you let the country become bankrupt? No, the country will never become bankrupt. But pray do not prevent the abusers of their trust from becoming bankrupt. Do not prevent them from becoming odious to the public, and replaced by better men. Any Federalist who lends money to Government must go and shake hands with James Madison and claim fellowship with Felix Grundy. Let him no more call himself a Federalist and friend to his country. HE WILL BE CALLED BY OTHERS INFAMOUS."

"On the whole, then, there are two very strong reasons why Federalists will not lend money—first, because it would be a base abandonment of political and moral principles; and secondly, because it is pretty certain they will never be paid again."

"It is very grateful to find that the universal sentiment is, that any man who lends his money to the Government at the present time, will forfeit all claim to common honesty and common courtesy among all true friends to the country."—Boston Gazette, April 14, 1814.

"The war advocates appear very sore and chagrined at the failure of the late loan, and in their ravings ascribe the measure subscriptions to the truths which have appeared in the Federal papers on this subject."—Boston Centinel, March 24, 1813.

"Our merchants constitute an honorable, high-minded, independent, and intelligent class of citizens. They feel the oppression, injury, and mockery with which they are treated by their Government. They will lend them money to retrace their steps, but none to persevere in their present course. Let every highwayman find his own pistol."—Boston Gazette.

"We have only room this evening to say that we trust no true friend to his country will be found among the subscribers to the Gallatin loan."—New York Evening Post.

"My brother farmers, if you have money to let, let it lay. If the war continues, you will purchase your stock, at four years old, cheaper than you can raise it; so unjust is this offensive war, in which our rulers have plunged us, in the sober consideration of millions, that they cannot conscientiously approach the God of armies for his blessing upon it."—Boston Centinel, January 13, 1813.

I should like to make running commentaries on these extracts, but time will not allow. They furnish fine precedents for certain persons of the present day to follow, and they seem not to have been overlooked.

Every plan was resorted to to intimidate persons from loaning money to the Government. Those that did so were banished from certain circles of society—circles that assumed to contain all the talent, wealth, and decency of the land. To such an extent was this carried, that loans had to be made in the most secret manner.

Gilbert & Dean, Government agents to procure portions of loans, in their advertisement, declared "that the names of all subscribers shall be known only to the undersigned." So with Mr. Putnam, another agent. He stated, in his advertisement, that the "name of any applicant shall, at his request, be known only to the subscriber."

The Boston Gazette of April 14, 1814, commented upon these and similar advertisements in the following strain:

"How degraded must our Government be, even in their own eyes, when they resort to such tricks to obtain money which a common *Je n'broker* would be ashamed of. They must be well acquainted with the fabric of the men who are to loan them money, when they offer, that if they will have the goodness to do it, their names shall not be exposed to the world. They know right well that the cause is so sneaking and vile, that nobody would be seen in the broad daylight to lend them money."

"No one doubts of their rancor and ill-will towards England; that they are willing to fight her as long as they can get money."

"On the whole, we think it no way to get out of the war, to give money to the Government, when the very thing that prevents them from carrying it on, is the want of money."

Opposition to their own country, endeavors to paralyze the arms of patriotic citizens, and extravagant praises of Great Britain's generosity, magnanimity, and Christian-like virtues, marked the conduct of the Federal class of our citizens at this period of the history of our country. Even the most infamous of the British officers had to receive their praises. The Boston Centinel said of Cockburn, that, "notwithstanding the scurrility poured on him in the Virginia and Maryland papers, he is a humane and liberal gentleman."

This class of our citizens are not all dead. There are plenty of them yet living. And if a war breaks out between this and a foreign Power, from the indications already given us in this Oregon controversy, they will deride their own Government just as did the Federalists previous to and during the late war. I say from the indications already given; for such have been given of this feeling, not only in Congress, but in the pulpits, and by the press. I could give many instances; but must refer to every man's observation, who has had his eyes and ears open since this controversy commenced. I will give a specimen or two, however.

I quote first from the New York Journal of Commerce:

"The conduct of Great Britain is generous, and such as becomes a great and Christian nation; ours, anything but what it should be."

"From the beginning, all the generosity has come from Great Britain, all the liberality from us—all the good news from London, all the bad news from Washington."

"Nobody in all the civilized world doubts the sincerity of England's desire for peace, while our own citizens credit, with very slender faith, the repeated professions of our Government."

The editor of this paper must have had the Rev. Mr. Gardiner's sermon before him, when he wrote what I have quoted from his paper.

"Now that the offer of arbitration has been made by England, so freely and nobly, yet utterly, almost insolently, rejected by the President, all the world will feel and say, that, if there should be war, ours will be the injustice and wickedness of it, and England will be in the right."—*New York Evangelist*.

This is a mild extract from that paper. It contained, for a while, the most virulent abuse of the President and his supporters—fully equal to any ever poured out by the Federalists upon Jefferson or Madison, and their Democratic supporters. I shall dismiss it by saying, that I have no earthly doubt but the editor would burn at the stake a Christian brother for a difference in creed, and sell his country for less than a bishopric.

From the Cincinnati Gazette of February 18, 1846, I take the following extracts:

"There is something glorious in watching the movements of good men disinterestedly working for a good cause. The ties and prejudices of country, love of home and hatred of foes, are all forgotten at such times; and we turn involuntarily to the scene wherein is exhibited the beauty of virtue, and the ennobling loftiness of a pure spirit, in wonder and admiration."

"This generous feeling may be indulged in now to our heart's content. When a conflict between the United States and Great Britain appeared inevitable, a short time since, a portion of the British press, with a large portion of the British mercantile interest, proposed an appeal to the merchants of the realm urging a pacific effort, and suggesting besides a friendly address to the merchants of the United States, declaring peace, and the cultivation of the arts of peace, as the only great objects worthy the strife or emulation of two great nations. Englishmen spoke to Englishmen in this appeal, and they spoke like true men. The conclusion of it is as follows:

"peaceful watchword be, (said they), on all occasions: *Arbitrate—arbitrate—arbitrate.*"

"It was a noble move, and nobly made. Forgetting party pride, overlooking what was considered as a national insult, and burying all excitement, the British merchants, who made and who seconded this appeal, stood upon the purest ground of an elevated philanthropy, and a pure Christianity."

"And to show the spirit in which they moved, and the manner in which they were met, we subjoin the following animated address by subjects of Great Britain to their fellow-subjects:"

[Here follows the address. The Gazette then proceeds:]

"And when we turn from this enlarged and benevolent spirit of the merchants of Great Britain to the miserable and narrow special pleading of the American Secretary, how must we deplore the difference! * * * The absurd and peremptory refusal of Mr. Buchanan, after the negotiations were reopened, to arbitrate upon any terms—so contrary to every Christian principle, so utterly at war with the usage of nations, so openly in violation of every humane and benevolent feeling, and so adverse to the very spirit of our institutions—stands in sad and melancholy contrast with the noble conduct of these merchants of Great Britain, and gives a deep and fatal stab, to what Americans should regard as first in their thoughts and affections—the character of the Republic."

Where would such a paper be likely to be found were we engaged in a contest with Great Britain, with all its sympathies in favor of that Government, and its dislikes to the action of the present Administration so strong? I think there could be no trouble in assigning it its proper place.

There is a great similarity in many particulars between the sentiments expressed by the British party during the Administration of Mr. Madison, and those who now think that Great Britain is all right, and their own country all wrong in reference to this Oregon controversy.

Hear the Cincinnati Gazette of January 28th, 1846:

"A pause—the way!—There is a sudden pause at Washington. What means it? Between the planning and the doing of a dread deed, it is said, there is always a solemn stillness. Can it be that we are on the verge—the very verge of war?"

"Four weeks ago, and there was no holding the majority of the House of Representatives. The notice now—the notice—nothing but the notice—this was what we heard, and all that we heard. But suddenly all is silent. A Florida election case—how Mr. Fremont's books shall be distributed—almost anything is discussed except Oregon and the notice."

"In the Senate, too, where Mr. Allen figures!—why, he and his war men could hardly be kept still, and even as late as the 21st, the very remarkable chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, talked of going 'on our knees to Victoria,' and sneered at Mr. Calhoun with some sharpness. Yet

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"1. That there would be no just cause for war in the proposed Oregon measures.

"2. That there would be no war.

"Now wags at Washington, and ill-natured folks do say, that there has been an arrival or so from Europe; that there are changes in the ministry there; that these changes bode no continuance of peace, if we really want a war; and that the powers that be, with the majority in either House at Washington, who, from the beginning, meant to have no war, only a little noise about it, are rather scared—not that exactly—but satisfied that it is time for them to be prudent."

"But the majority at Washington are sobered down; they have exhausted their wild gas; and since this European news, are more prudent, and will be more dignified."

Now, what said some of the Federal presses in 1811 and 1812? Listen:

"They [the leaders in Congress] have already gone far enough in war. They are conscious they cannot commence, prosecute, and terminate a war; that the hands which begin, will never finish it. They shrink from it. They already stagger under the weight.

"They are frightened as the aspect becomes a little more serious, and wish to go home and think of it."—*Philadelphia Gazette*, January 10, 1812.

"We are firmly persuaded that the majority in Congress do not mean to declare war at present; that they dare not; and that all their threats are but contemptible vaporing, which will die away like the vapors of a drunken man before they rise."—*Boston Repository*, December 24, 1811.

"We said yesterday, that we did not believe the Oregon question would in any way be mixed up with the Tariff; and we said so, not only because all the organs of the Administration were taking extreme ground against Great Britain, but because Mr. Buchanan, with Messrs. Allen and Cass, besides being thus ultra, seemed desirous of throwing as many obstacles in the way of settlement as they could. Is this violence put on? Are the abuse and bullying we hear against England, only cloaks to hide the real policy of the Cabinet, viz: a settlement of the Oregon question, at the sacrifice of the Tariff? If so, the American people will be duped by their own rulers, and they outwitted by British diplomacy, in the most shameful manner; duped, too, by the fullest show of hate and opposition on the part of these rulers, when, in reality, they felt neither, and were resolved to have, not only no war, but no difficulty with England.

"We cannot believe, when we look back at Mr. Polk's Inaugural threat, or the repetition of it in the Message, at the strong declarations of Mr. Buchanan, and yet more at the bluster and bravado of their organs, in and out of Congress, that such is the fact, or that any party would dare attempt such barefaced masquerade."—*Cincinnati Gazette*, February 18, 1846.

"You do not understand what is here called management. There will, as I believe, be no war. The warwhoop, the orders in council, the non-importation, and Presidential caucusing, will vanish before summer."—*Baltimore Federal Gazette*, January, 1812.

"Our Government will not make war on Great Britain; but will keep up a constant irritation on some pretence or other, for the sake of maintaining their influence as a party. The more the public suffer, the more irritable they will be."—*Boston Repository*, April 17, 1810.

"The truth is, our Democrats love to talk of war, and swagger, and boast, and vaunt, but they abhor fighting. When danger approaches they skulk like dastardly poltroons."—*Worcester Spy*, 1814.

It seems, too, that it is a subject of satire and ridicule, for Democrats nowadays to speak in the halls of Congress about national honor. The national honor must be left to the keeping of the Whigs, I suppose.

Alluding to those members of Congress who dared to speak of national honor, in connexion with our rights in Oregon, the *Cincinnati Gazette* of March 24, 1846, says:

"These men form a distinct class at Washington, and they run up all the lower degrees of the political gamut. We may start with Senator Allen, stop at Douglas of Illinois, and end with Chipman of Michigan, and we shall find but

one song sung—so that a stranger would suppose the individuals to be a sort of chancery court to protect and keep safe the country's honor. Is commerce endangered? The reply is, honor demands the sacrifice. Is the public peace put in jeopardy? It is done to protect that honor. In short nothing is said or accomplished, planned or agitated, by these men, except on this basis, until now they are known at Washington by the name of the 'National honor members.'"

Well, others of the same stamp have spoken in the same strain on other days. The members of Congress who advocated and sustained the late war, spoke of national honor, and were ridiculed for it by such men as Timothy Pickens, the apologist for British impressment. In his first letter to the people of Massachusetts, April 5, 1812, he says:

"Abandoning your greatest and best interests, you are to engage in a destructive war for honor. You are to fight for honor, for 'Congressional honor,' not for national honor, but for the honor of a set of men, a majority of whom, together with the Administration, and Thomas Jefferson, the master-spring at their head, have been reviled, and, figuratively speaking, cuffed and spit upon by Bonaparte; and yet these men now talk of honor, and are urging you into a war to defend it."

But I pass from these things to inquire, what effect will these leading commercial journals, that abuse the action of their own Government, and applaud so highly that of Great Britain in relation to this Oregon controversy, have on its settlement? What effect will the speeches that have been made in Congress depreciating our title to Oregon, and advocating the superiority of England's over our own; dilating on the power and resources of the British navy, and exaggerating our own weakness; holding forth to the country the idea that it is a controversy about President-making and the advancement of party, which the people care but little about; a country barren and unprofitable,—I say, what effect will these speeches be likely to produce upon the British Government? Not an increased anxiety to have the matter speedily settled, but the reverse. And, besides, they will more certainly bring about a war than all the war speeches and war essays that have gone to the public during the session.

Similar effects were produced by the factious opposition of the Federalists to the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison, by their denouncing the acts of their own Government, and praising those of Great Britain. They deceived Great Britain, and made her delay doing us justice until war was inevitable.

The letters of Mr. Henry show conclusively to my mind that the effect produced by the conduct of the Federalists was what I have pointed out: and the effect is a very natural one, and will always be produced by like causes.

In his letter of March 13, 1809, to Governor Craig, he says:

"You will perceive from the accounts that will reach you in the public papers, both from Washington and Massachusetts, that the Federalists of the Northern States have succeeded in making Congress believe, that with such an opposition as they would make to the General Government, a war must be confined to their own territory, and might be too much for that Government to sustain.

At all events, it cannot be necessary to the preservation of peace that Great Britain should make any great concession at the present moment; more especially as the more important changes that occur in Europe might render it inconvenient for her to adhere to any stipulations in favor of neutral maritime nations."

In his letter of March 20, 1809, in speaking of Mr. Madison's adherents in the Eastern States, he says:

"They consider all the menaces and 'dreadful note of preparation' to be mere finesse, intended only to obtain concessions from England on cheap terms."

In his letter of April 13, 1809, he says:

"Had the majority in the New England States continued to approve of the public measures, it is extremely probable that Great Britain would now have to choose between war and concession. But the aspect of things in this respect is changed, and a war would produce an incurable alienation of the Eastern States; and bring the whole country in subordination to the interest of England, whose navy would prescribe and enforce the terms upon which the commercial States should carry, and the agricultural States export, their surplus produce."

I close this branch of the subject, by presenting a copy of a letter published in the Londonderry Journal, November 16, 1812, to show how far persons professing to be American citizens carried their contempt for their own Government. Whether any such letters have gone forth during this controversy, time must show. I have no doubt but such have.

"Extract of a letter to a gentleman in this place, dated

"PHILADELPHIA, May 8, 1812.

"You will perceive by the copy of the bill which I enclose, that we Americans are 'at our dirty work again.' But I advise you not to be alarmed at the violence of our proceedings. We shall continue to bluster. This is our characteristic. And we would do no more if we could. But it is not in our power. We have not a dollar in the treasury—no army deserving the name of one—and are actually without a navy."

This letter reads a good deal after the style of many of the leading commercial Federal newspapers of the present day.

There is another consideration that comes in to add to the force of those I have already alluded to, and that is, *Great Britain's deep hostility toward us.*

She is our inveterate enemy. The whole history of her relations with this country shows this to be true. I know this may be considered a bold saying, but it seems to me if any person will sit down and calmly read all that has transpired between the two countries, and particularly relating to this country, he will be convinced of its truth.

Witness her orders in council of 1793 and 1805, issued without any previous notice to our merchants, by which the ocean was swept of our vessels, millions of American property taken from its lawful owners, and thousands of our citizens bankrupted.

These lawless and rapacious proceedings of the British Government, were charged by the Philadelphia merchants, in their memorial to Congress, as calculated to produce "nothing but the ruin of individuals, the destruction of their commerce, and the degradation of their country." That by them, "every sail stretched to collect the unwary Americans, who are unsuspectingly confiding in what was the law of nations."

¶ The memorial of the Baltimore merchants to Congress says, that "their vessels and effects, to a large amount, have lately been captured by the commissioned cruisers of Great Britain, upon the foundation of new principles suddenly invented, and applied to this habitual traffic; and suggested and promulgated, for the first time, by sentences of condemnation; by which unavoidable ignorance has been considered as criminal, and an honorable

'confidence in the justice of a friendly nation' pursued with penalty and forfeiture."

That "she forbids us from transporting in our vessels, as in peace we could, the property of her enemies; enforces against us a rigorous list of contraband; dams up the ordinary channels of our trade; abridges, trammels, and obstructs what she permits us to prosecute; and then refers us to our accustomed traffic in time of peace for the criterion of our commercial rights, in order to justify the consummation of that ruin with which our lawful commerce is menaced by her maxims and her conduct."

That "the pernicious qualities of this doctrine are enhanced and aggravated, as from its nature might be expected, by the fact that *Great Britain gives no notice of the time when or the circumstances in which she means to apply and enforce it.* The orders of 6th November, 1793, by which the seas were swept of our vessels and effects, were for the first time announced by the ships of war and privateers, by which they were carried into execution."

That Great Britain "is confessedly solitary in the use of this invention, by which rapacity is systematized and a state of neutrality and war are made substantially the same."

The memorials to Congress of the New York and Boston merchants breathe the same indignant language. Greater outrages were never perpetrated by one nation on another than were perpetrated by the British on American property under these orders. Time will not permit a full exposure of their enormities. In 1807, an additional order was passed permitting the trade the previous orders were intended to destroy, on condition our vessels entered some British port, paid a transit duty, and took out a license. This was adding insult to injury.

Next came the orders in council of November 11, 1807, by which we were forbidden to trade with any country in the world except with such as were at peace with England. Under this last order the greatest outrages were perpetrated on American commerce. We were treated with insult, injury, and oppression. And yet the British Government found defenders in Americans. Mr. Cary says: "It is a most singular fact, that the cause of England has been far more ably supported in our debates and in our political speculations and essays, than in London itself." And if he were writing the history of the present times, he would doubtless say, that the British claims to the Oregon territory have been more ably set forth and vindicated on the floor of the American Senate than by any of the British plenipotentiaries.

Look, also, to the manner in which Great Britain claimed and exercised the right to impress seamen from American vessels; and this, too, for a long series of years, and to a disastrous extent. No nation that submits to it can be independent; no nation will practise it towards another, unless she designs to injure and degrade that other. There is, and can be, no friendly feeling in the one that practises it towards the one to which it is applied. And I do not want stronger proof of Great Britain's hostility to this country than her long-continued practice of impressing from our vessels. She does not do it now; not because she

loves us more than she loves herself.

For further the position to keep the Mr. Cushing 1839, as follows:

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loves us more than formerly, but because she fears us more.

For further proof of her hostility to us, look at the position in which she has always endeavored to keep the Indians in regard to us. I quote from Mr. Cushing's report to Congress of January 4, 1839, as fully expressive of this position. He says:

"It has at all times been the policy of Great Britain to keep the red men under subsidy to her, so as to have them always ready to bring into the field against the United States. At the epoch of the Revolution, we proposed that the Indians should be suffered to remain neutral; but England refused. She has kept them under arms, or in a semi-hostile state, against us, more or less constantly, from that day to this. Our commissioners at Ghent proposed an agreement for the perpetual neutrality of the Indians; but England again refused it. The perseverance of Great Britain in this policy has been deplorably injurious to us; and its effects are written in the scalping knife and the brand of the Indian, in letters of blood and fire, in the history of the southern and western States."

But the strongest proof of her hostility towards this country is to be found in her efforts to produce a dissolution of the Union. Complete evidence of such efforts are to be found in the letters of the British Governor of Canada in 1809, (J. H. Craig,) and the letters of his agent (Mr. Henry) employed by him for this nefarious purpose.

Mr. Madison, in his Message to Congress, March 9, 1812, on this subject says:

"I lay before Congress copies of certain documents which remain in the Department of State. They prove that, at a recent period, whilst the United States, notwithstanding the wrongs sustained by them, ceased not to observe the laws of peace and neutrality towards Great Britain; and in the midst of amicable professions and negotiations on the part of the British Government, through her public Minister here, a secret agent of that Government was employed in certain States more especially at the seat of Government (Boston) in Massachusetts, in fomenting disaffection to the constituted authorities of the nation, and intrigues with the disaffected, for the purpose of bringing about resistance to the laws, and eventually, in concert with British forces, of DESTROYING THE UNION, and forming the eastern part thereof into a political connexion with Great Britain."

I propose to give some extracts from these letters, to show their character, and the extent of the efforts of the British Government in this matter.

Governor Craig's instructions to Mr. Henry, dated

"QUEBEC, 6th February, 1809.

"I am to request that, with your earliest convenience, you will proceed to Boston. The principal object I recommend to your attention is, the endeavor to obtain the most accurate information of the true state of affairs in that part of the Union, which, from its wealth, the number of its inhabitants, and the known intelligence and ability of several of its leading men, must naturally possess a very considerable influence over, and will, indeed, probably lead the other eastern States of America in the part they may take in this important crisis.

"It has been supposed, that if the Federalists of the eastern States should be successful in obtaining that decided influence which may enable them to direct the public opinion, it is not improbable that, rather than submit to a continuance of the difficulties and distress to which they are now subject, they will exert that influence to bring about a separation from the general Union. The earliest information on this subject may be of great consequence to our Government, as it may also be that it should be informed now far, in such an event, they would look to England for assistance, or be disposed to enter into a connexion with us.

"Although it would be highly inexpedient that you should in any manner appear as an avowed agent, yet if you could contrive to obtain an intimacy with any of the leading party, it may not be improper that you should insinuate, though with great caution, that if they should wish to enter into any communication with our Government, through me, you are

authorized to receive any such, and will safely transmit it to me."

The first letter of Mr. Henry to his employer (Governor Craig) was dated

BURLINGTON, VERMONT, February 14, 1809.

"I have remained here two days, in order fully to ascertain the progress of the arrangements heretofore made for organizing an efficient opposition to the General Government. The Governor of the State makes no secret of his determination, as commander-in-chief of the militia, to refuse obedience to any command from the General Government which can tend to interrupt the good understanding that prevails between the citizens of Vermont and his Majesty's subjects in Canada; and in case of war, will use his influence to preserve the State neutral; if these resolutions are carried into effect, the State of Vermont may be considered as an ally of Great Britain." The mode of resistance "may in some measure depend upon the reliance that the leading men may place upon assurances of support from his Majesty's representatives in Canada; and as I shall be on the spot to tender this whenever the moment arrives that it can be done with effect, there is no doubt that all their measures may be made subordinate to the intentions of his Majesty's Government; everything tends to encourage the belief that the dissolution of the Union will be accelerated by that spirit which now actuates both political parties."

"BOSTON, March 3, 1809.

"I have sufficient means of information to enable me to judge of the proper period for offering the co-operation of Great Britain, and opening a correspondence between the Governor General of British America, and those individuals, who, from the part they take in the opposition to the National Government, or the influence they may possess in a new order of things, that may grow out of the present differences, should be qualified to act on behalf of the northern States."

"BOSTON, March 7, 1809.

"Should the Congress possess spirit and independence enough to place their popularity in jeopardy by so strong a measure, [war], the Legislature of Massachusetts will give tone to the neighboring States; will declare itself permanent until a new election of members; invite a Congress to be composed of delegates from the Federal States, and erect a separate Government for their common defence and common interest. They would by such an act be in a condition to make or reject proposals from Great Britain. * * * Scarce any other aid would be necessary, and perhaps none, than a few vessels of war from the Halifax station."

"BOSTON, March 13, 1809.

"To bring about a separation of the States, under distinct and independent Governments, is an affair of more uncertainty; and, however desirable, cannot be effected but by a series of acts and long continued policy tending to irritate the southern and conclude the northern people. The former are agricultural, and the latter, a commercial people. The mode of cheering and depressing either, is too obvious to require illustration. This, I am aware, is an object of much interest in Great Britain, as it would forever secure the integrity of his Majesty's possessions on the continent, and make the two Governments, or whatever number the present confederacy might form into, as useful, and as much subject to the influence of Great Britain, as her colonies can be rendered. * * * I lament the repeal of the embargo, because it was calculated to accelerate the progress of these States towards a revolution that would have put an end to the only Republic that remains to prove that a Government founded on political equality can exist in a season of trial and difficulty, or is calculated to insure either security or happiness to a people."

"BOSTON, March 20, 1809.

"It should therefore be the peculiar care of Great Britain to foster divisions between the North and the South."

"BOSTON, May 5, 1809.

"Although the recent changes that have occurred quiet all apprehensions of war, and consequently lessen all prospect of a separation of the States, I think it necessary to transmit by the mail of each week a sketch of passing events."

"BOSTON, May 25, 1809.

"I beg leave to suggest, that in the present state of things in this country, my presence can contribute very little to the interest of Great Britain. If Mr. Erskine be sanctioned in all he has conceded, by his Majesty's Ministers, it is unnecessary for me, as indeed it would be unavailing, to make

any attempt to carry into effect the original purposes of my mission."

The mission of Mr. Henry failed in its object. But it would appear that the idea of producing a disunion of the States, was persevered in until 1815.

The British United Service Journal of May, 1840, page 30, remarks in reference to the Hartford Convention, that its object "was to separate the northern and eastern from the southern and western States, to establish a limited monarchy in the first named States, placing one of our princes of blood on the throne, and strengthening the new transatlantic kingdom by an alliance offensive and defensive with England. *The treaty at Ghent put a stop to the correspondence, which was in active progress on this subject, BUT THAT CORRESPONDENCE IS STILL IN EXISTENCE; and however improbable it may appear to Yankee pride, were a war to break out again between us, something similar would occur before the 'United States' were two years older. The destruction of the public buildings at the nominal seat of the Federal Government, it was conceived, would indirectly, if not directly, forward the views of the New England separatists.*"

But though the treaty at Ghent put a stop to this correspondence, it may well be doubted whether it put a stop to the idea in the British mind of producing a separation of the States of this Union. That idea, I believe, is still harbored, notwithstanding all their professions of friendship for us.

The British emissary, Henry, was on his mission in the eastern States to bring about resistance to the laws of the General Government, and a dissolution of our Union, and which would have brought in their train civil war, while negotiations were pending between the two countries for a settlement of all their differences. In connexion with this, I invite attention to a part of the speech of Mr. Fisk, made on this floor, on a motion to print Henry's letters, as reported in the National Intelligencer of March 12, 1812. Mr. Fisk said:

"Why, sir, can gentlemen seriously doubt the truth of the facts stated by this Mr. Henry, when we have it from the highest authority, that the former British Minister, Mr. Erskine, while here at this very time, was in the same business this Henry was sent to perform? In a letter written by that Minister to his Government, and published by its order, he tells them: 'I have endeavored, by the most strict and diligent inquiries into the views and strength of the Federal party, to ascertain to what extent they would be willing and able to resist the measures of the party in power, and how far they could carry the opinions of the country along with them in their attempts to remove the embargo, without recurring to hostilities against both Great Britain and France.' And again he tells them, in his letters of 15th February, 1809, when speaking of the divisions which then agitated this country, and the opposition made to the laws by the people of the eastern States, 'the ultimate consequences of such differences and jealousies arising between the eastern and southern States, would inevitably tend to a dissolution of the Union, which has been for some time talked of, and has of late, as I have heard, been seriously contemplated by many of the leading people in the eastern division.'"

How Mr. Erskine ascertained all these matters—whether at his dinner table, or by secret agents—does not appear. Certain, it seems, from his own letters, that he was feeling how far certain leading persons in the eastern States were "willing and able to resist the measures of the party in power."

It appears from what I have adduced, that Great Britain never has had any other feeling for us than that of enmity. I think I can assign plausible reasons for her ill will. We resisted her tyranny, and forced her to declare us independent of her power and authority. That humbled her pride as well as her vanity. In the late war, we encountered her on that element of which she claimed to be the mistress, disputed her supremacy, and proved, by repeated victories, that there was a young master abroad. And now, in the peaceful pursuits of commerce, we are fast rivaling, and bid fair to outstrip her. Great Britain's power is in her commerce. Her seat of empire is not as large as many of the States of this Union, but her dependencies are everywhere, and all of them tributary to her commercial interests. She wants the Oregon territory, that she may have the best harbors on that side of the Pacific, under her own control, to give to her vessels the command of the rich commerce of that ocean; which commerce, she knows we would, from our geographical position, monopolize to a great extent, had we the control of those harbors. For territory, Oregon is of little value to her; for commercial purposes, in her estimation, it is of great value.

I think, too, that the facts I have presented, besides proving the general enmity of Great Britain towards us, also warn us not to put too much confidence in her professions of friendship, even while negotiations are pending and amicable relations subsisting between the two countries, and not to trust too far those whom she sends here to represent her in the capacity of Minister.

It is apparent to my mind from what I have stated, that Great Britain will not settle this controversy by agreeing to 49° as the boundary, unless from powerful motives of State necessity. She will risk a great deal rather than yield, what I consider, her unjust pretensions to the Oregon territory. But her situation at home in relation to her Irish and Welsh subjects, and in relation to her manufacturing districts, and her position in regard to France and Russia may be of such a nature, that a war would be too momentous in its results for her to risk it. I have no allusion to any personal fear in the English people for war, for they have as little of that quality in their composition as any people on the face of the earth, as their history well attests. I speak, therefore, not of any apprehensions that may be entertained of the simple results of naval or land encounters between their forces and those of this Republic, but of what war might produce, aside from these encounters. Such may be her critical and delicate situation at home and with other Powers, that a war might be instrumental, apart from anything we could do, in breaking her power, and dissolving her empire. If such be her situation, she will not risk a war for all of Oregon, nor for any part of it, much as her ancient grudges and continued enmity, the position which she has assumed in this controversy, our own divisions, timidity, and abuse of our own Government and disparagement of our own title, might invite her to hostilities.

Before I leave those gentlemen who insist on the 49th parallel as the proper boundary, I will refer to another of the positions assumed by many of

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them. They seemed to argue as if this question were a western question, and they thought it strange that the western people should demand that decisive action should be had in its settlement, and they taxed their ingenuity to assign suitable reasons for what seemed to them rash policy on the part of the West.

Some intimated that it was because the people of the West loved war; others because we would be exempt from its dangers and calamities; while others attributed it to the hope of increased prices for our produce.

Now, none of these inferences are correct. The people of the West appreciate the blessings of peace, as much as any other section of the Union. It is true that the people of the West are hardy, enterprising, and not enticed by luxurious habits. These qualities, associated as they are with a proper sense of justice, while they make us quick to resent wrongs, will never drive us into war for the sake of war. Peace has made the West; but it is that peace, whose foundations were laid on two sanguinary wars.

Nor is it because the people of the West would be exempt from the dangers and calamities of war. It was not so heretofore, when the West poured out its best blood in defence of the country against the attacks of Great Britain and her savage allies. And I can see no cause for believing that the case would be different were we again unfortunately engaged in war.

The other intimation is equally without foundation. To whom would we sell our surplus produce? Our foreign markets would be in a great measure cut off; our home market would be curtailed; for the South that now purchases largely from us, would, in the event of a war, be driven to raise its own breadstuffs. If produce would rise it would be because less of it would be raised, and at far greater cost than at present, on account of so many of those now engaged in agriculture being withdrawn from that employment, to engage in the defence of the country.

But, sir, I will tell you why it is that the West takes such a deep interest in this matter. It is because we look upon it as a national question, because we believe that our title to the whole of Oregon up to 54° 40' is good, and because our opponent is Great Britain. The people of the West love the whole country, and that makes them ardent in its defence; they believe our title to the whole of Oregon good, and that makes them firm in its maintenance; they believe the crisis demands promptitude, and that makes them desire decided action. They do not want to see any foreign Power occupy any portion of American territory, much less Great Britain, whom they are slow to forget. For they cannot but recollect their perpetual enemy, who has been the instigator of nearly all the Indian outrages that have covered almost every square league of the West with the blood of its men, women, and children. An enemy who even now, to intimidate us from asserting our rights to the Oregon territory, at the same time that he boasts of his refinement and Christian character, as if impelled by the instincts of his nature, openly intimates that, should war come, he will incite the negroes of the South to murder their masters,

and will also burn the cities on our seaboard; so that, while the butchery is going on with one hand, he can rejoice in the bonfires of our cities made by the other.

It is our rights, the remembrance of wrongs, and I hope a proper appreciation of national honor, that make the people of the West take the part they do in this controversy.

I shall say but little respecting our title to the Oregon country. Its validity has been fully established by the very able argument of the present Secretary of State. It has also been generally conceded on this floor, except in a few instances wherein the claims of England to the country watered by Frazer's river, were attempted to be established on the same grounds that our claims to the country watered by the Columbia river rest—viz., discovery and exploration.

It is to this single point, as it has been about the only objection urged to our title in the arguments put forth in this Hall, that I shall say all that I design saying respecting our title.

Robert Gray, of Boston, was the first Christian discoverer and explorer of any part of the Columbia river. This took place in 1792. In 1805, Lewis and Clarke, under the authority of the United States, explored the Columbia river from its sources to its mouth. Agreeably to the law of nations these gave us the country watered by this river.

But the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. HILLIARD] insists that, by the same rule, Great Britain is entitled to the country watered by Frazer's river; since Alexander Mackenzie, an Englishman, was the first Christian discoverer of that river. This discovery was made in 1793.

There is a very material difference between the two cases, which entirely destroys the analogy.

When Gray discovered the mouth of the Columbia, and sailed twenty miles up that river, the United States were under no restrictions by any treaty stipulations with Spain, who discovered this shore of the Pacific. They were at full liberty, by the law of nations, to make the discovery, and profit by it.

The case was entirely different with Great Britain, when Mackenzie, in 1793, discovered Frazer's river. In 1790, Spain and Great Britain entered into a convention, called the Nootka Convention, by which Great Britain acquired the privilege of free trade throughout the northwest coast with the natives of the country. While that convention existed, every subject of Great Britain who had anything to do with that country, acted under the authority and protection of that convention. He could not act independently of it. It is plain, therefore, that when Mackenzie discovered Frazer's river, he was in the country by permission of that convention. He could not act adversely to the interests of Spain without violating that convention. He was not at liberty to take any advantage of that discovery for his own country, as he might have done had there been no such treaty as that which then existed between Spain and England. The treaty existing at the time of the discovery bars Great Britain from taking advantage of it. The discovery enured to the benefit of whoever, at the termination of the Nootka Conven-

tion, was entitled to the country. The Nootka Convention was terminated in 1796 by the declaration of war by Spain against Great Britain. The United States having acquired all the title of Spain to the northwest coast, is entitled to the country watered by Frazer's river.

But it may be asked, if the United States have the right to the whole country up to $54^{\circ} 40'$, what is there to negotiate about? I will tell you.

The British, under the convention of 1818 and 1827 have made settlements and improvements in the Oregon country. It will require time to remove and settle up. Negotiate as to this time. Fix upon a period when the United States shall have the undisputed possession of the whole country. Negotiate about that and nothing else.

The bill under consideration is intended to throw the protecting shield of the laws of the United

States over the American settlers in Oregon, and to protect them in their rights. This is necessary for the settlers. The good among them need our laws for their protection, the vicious require them for restraint. They are also necessary to impress upon the Indians the power and extent of the Union, of which they have at present little or no idea. If the notice be given, and such a bill as the present do not pass, the notice will be positively injurious, for then the whole country would be under British power, authority, and law.

If the American Congress, after having authorized the notice to be given, shall not have the firmness to throw the protection of our laws over our settlers in Oregon, I hope that then the people of that country will declare themselves independent of all Governments, and establish one of their own.

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